This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the Application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 – 15 (Cancelled)

Claim 16 (twice amended)

Claims 17 – 20 (as last presented)

Claim 21 (new)

Amendments to the Claims:

1.-15. (cancelled)

16. (previously presented) A valve plate assembly for a compressor, which valve plate assembly comprises [[comprising]] a valve plate, a reed valve, a cylinder head, and a suction side [[chamber positioned between the valve plate and the cylinder head]], the reed valve being such that it comprises a reed, a port which is opened and closed by the reed, and damper means for mechanically damping motion of the reed; the port being positioned in the valve plate; the reed being positioned on a side of the valve plate which closes a cylinder of a piston and cylinder arrangement whereby the reed flexes into the cylinder when the reed opens the port; and the damper means comprising a tube which is connected to the valve plate, which extends vertically into the suction side [[chamber]], which is in communication with the port on a side of the port remote from the reed so as to enable the passage of refrigerant fluid through the compressor, and which is of such a size that, in use of the valve plate assembly, the tube contains a column of refrigerant fluid which is sufficient to provide substantial mechanical damping of the motion of the reed.

17. (previously presented) A valve plate assembly according to claim 16 in which the tube is such that it extends vertically above the port.

18. (previously presented) A valve plate assembly according to claim 16 in which the port is in the valve plate, and in which the length of the tube is greater than the diameter of the port.

19. (previously presented) A valve plate assembly according to claim 18 in which the length of the tube is at least twice the diameter of the port.

20. (previously presented) A compressor or a pump when including a valve plate assembly according to claim 16.

21. (New) A compressor for refrigeration apparatus, which compressor comprises a cylinder block, a cylinder in the cylinder block, a piston in the cylinder and a valve plate assembly the valve plate assembly comprising a valve plate and a reed valve; the reed valve being such that it comprises a reed, a port which is opened and closed by the reed, and damper means for mechanically damping motion of the reed; the damper means comprising a tube which is attached to the valve plate, which is in communication with the port on a side of the port remote from the reed so as to enable the passage of refrigerant fluid through the compressor, and which is of such a size that, during use of the compressor, the tube contains a column of refrigerant fluid which is sufficient to dampen oscillatory backwards and forwards motion of the reed whereby unnecessary bending stresses of the reed are avoided, whereby the reed closes the port faster than without the damping, and whereby the refrigerant fluid flows into an inlet side of the valve plate with a smoother flow than without the damping and thereby reduces on noise generated by the compressor.